



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY  
Richard M. Flynn, Commissioner  
Division of Fire Safety  
Office of the State Fire Marshal  
J. William Degnan, State Fire Marshal  
Office: Richard M. Flynn Academy, Route 106, Concord, NH  
Mailing Address: 33 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03305  
603/271-3294, FAX 603/271-1091



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—September 5, 2005**

For further information, contact:

State Fire Marshal J. William Degnan (603-271-3294)

**FIRE OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH HIGH ENERGY PRICES**

With the approaching heating season and the high-energy prices, State Fire Marshal Bill Degnan recommends taking the time to check your heating systems. Fire Marshal Degnan is asking the public to be alert to fire hazards in the home. Having your heating system checked by a qualified professional will help insure the safety of the unit and also of great importance, the efficient burning of the fuel. Heating unit fires are still the number one cause of fires in New Hampshire and are preventable!

Chief Stephen Carrier, President of the NH Association of Fire Chiefs, says that heating fires are often the result of the improper use or maintenance of supplemental home heating appliances, such as wood stoves, coal stoves, and kerosene space heaters. He encourages home owners to make sure that combustible materials are kept at least 36 inches away from all heating surfaces and that ashes are disposed of in a covered metal container that is kept well away from buildings. Chimneys should be cleaned regularly, and the fire department should be called immediately at the first sign of a chimney fire. The Tilton/Northfield fire chief also warns that kerosene heaters should never be fueled indoors.

Degnan also advises that it is critical that every home has at least one smoke detector on each floor level and that every family should develop and practice a home fire escape plan. Smoke detectors should be tested monthly, and matches and lighters should be kept out of the reach of children at all times.

For further information concerning home fire safety, contact your local fire department or the state fire marshal's office.